

Message Text

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ACTION AID-20

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0410

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION UN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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AFDROUGHT

SUBJECT: SAHEL AIRLIFT AFTER AUGUST

1. FAO/OSRO HAS CABLED PAGE/MENSAH AND UNDP RES REPS FOR ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS PRIORITY AIRLIFT REQUIREMENTS AFTER AUGUST. INFO ALSO TO NEW YORK FOR MORSE, LAGOS FOR ANDERSON AND ROME EMBASSIES, US, UK, GERMANY, FRANCE, BELGIUM. HEADQUARTERS TENTATIVE JUDGMENT AT THIS STAGE SEEMS INDICATE MOST LIKELY NEEDS SEPTEMBER ARE IN NIGER, ASSUMING RIVER TRANSPORT 6TH REGION MALI IS EFFECTIVE. EXPECT FAO RECOMMEND DEPLOYMENT AS NEEDED AVAILABLE PLANES INCLUDING US AFTER RECEIPT RESPONSES.

2. MESSAGE AS FOLLOWS:

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A. AS YOU KNOW SELECTED AIRLIFT HAS SO FAR PREVENTED

BREAKDOWN FOOD GRAINS DISTRIBUTION CRITICAL AREAS SAHELIAN COUNTRIES NOTABLY MALI AND NIGER. NEED FOR CONTINUING SUCH AIRLIFT AS LONG AS NECESSARY STRESSED AT ABIDJAN TRANSPORT LOGISTICS MEETING. AIRCRAFT OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES MAGNIFICENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THIS VITAL EXERCISE. HOWEVER EXCEPT U.S. PLANES WHICH EXTENDED TO 15/9 CONTINUED AVAILABILITY OF OTHER PLANES BEYOND END AUGUST NOT KNOWN. ADVANCE PLANNING NOW SEEMS NECESSARY FOR SEPTEMBER. THIS MEANS ASSESSMENT IN CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS MINIMUM QUANTITIES TO BE AIRLIFTED TO DIFFERENT PLACES AND PERIOD FOR WHICH SEPTEMBER AIRLIFT NEEDED. BECAUSE OF HIGH COST AIRLIFT AND DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING AVIATION FUEL CERTAIN AREAS, AIRLIFT SHOULD BE PROGRESSIVELY WITHDRAWN FROM AREAS THAT COULD BE SERVED BY RIVER OR ROAD TRANSPORT. LIKEWISE INACCESSIBLE AREAS MUST CONTINUE TO RECEIVE AIR SUPPORT.

B. FROM MIDDLE AUGUST TWO GERMAN TRANSALLS AND ONE BELGIAN 130 AIRLIFTING FROM LAGOS TO AGADEZ ARLIT AND DIRKOU LESS THAN 50T DAILY AGAINST 100T DELIVERED PREVIOUSLY BY CAF. IS PRESENT CAPACITY ADEUATE OR NEEDS TO BE INCREASED. WHEN WILL THESE PLACES LIKELY TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO ROAD TRANSPORT TO WARRANT REDUCTION OR TERMINATION AIRLIFT.

C. REGARDING MALI TWO RAF HERCULES ARE AIRLIFTING FROM DAKAR AVERAGE 65 TONS DAILY TO KAYES, NIORO AND NARA. WITH REPORTED GOOD RAINS IN SENEGAL WHEN WOULD RIVER TRANSPORT BECOME POSSIBLE FOR KAYES AND WHEN WILL ROAD TRANSPORT BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM KAYES TO NIORO AND NARA QUERY WOULD THIS BE FEASIBLE BY END AUGUST TO ENABLE RAF TO BE WITHDRAWN OR USED IN OTHER CRITICAL AREAS. SIXTH REGION REQUIRING 100 TONS DAILY SERVED BY THREE USA HERCULES AND TWO GERMAN TRANSALLS FROM BAMAKO. TEMPORARY BREAKDOWN AND AVIATION FUEL SHORTAGE BAMAKO HAVE REDUCED DAILY AIRLIFT CAPACITY. UNDERSTAND HOWEVER ALL FIVE PLANES FROM BAMAKO EXPECTED TO HAUL FROM 25/8 ONE HUNDRED THIRTY TONS DAILY TO SIXTH REGION WHICH SEEMS TO COVER THAT REGION ADEQUATELY. UNDERSTAND ALSO BOATS BEGINNING LEAVE BAMAKO'S PORT FOR TOMBOUCTOU AND GAO AND THAT ONE LIGHT BARGE CARRYING 100 TONS LEFT FOR SIXTH REGION POSSIBLY 21/8. COMPANIE DE LA NAVIGATION OFFICIALS REPORTED PLANNING TO SEND GRAIN CONVOY CARRYING UNCLASSIFIED

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3000 TONS TO SIXTH REGION ABOUT THREE WEEKS.

D. PLEASE EXAMINE THESE VARIOUS ISSUES AND PROCEED CONSULTATION WITH MENSAH TO BAMAKO AND NIAMEY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH UNDP RESREPS GOVERNMENTS AND LOCAL EMBASSIES TO FORMULATE MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AIRLIFT PLAN BEYOND AUGUST AND BEFORE ANY MAJOR DONOR WITHDRAWS VALUABLE AIRLIFT CONTRIBUTION.

E. FOR OTHER COUNTRIES SHORT TERM HELP AS HITHERTO PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENTS OR OSRO AS NEEDS ARISE SEEMS ADEQUATE. COPYING CABLE TO ALL UNDP RESREPS FOR SIMULTANEOUS EXAMINATION NOTABLY MALI AND NIGER IN CONSULTATION GOVERNMENTS AND LOCAL EMBASSIES CONCERNED WITH REQUEST THEY COMMUNICATE THEIR VIEWS TO YOU AT OUAGADOUGOU AND TO OSRO. COPYING ALSO TO CONCERNED EMBASSIES HERE NAMELY USA, UK, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, BELGIUM AND FRANCE FOR INFORMATION. NEHEMIAH.

3. SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE ALSO SENT PAGE: AIRLIFT ADVANCE PLANNING UNDERSTAND THAT FEW DAYS AGO MALIAN MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATION SUPPLIES EXPRESSED VIEW AT DAKAR TO JOURNALISTS THAT RAF PLANES WOULD HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED MISSION FIRST REGION BY END AUGUST AS NIORO AND NARA HAVE ADEQUATE STOCKS FOR ONE MONTH TO CARRY TILL HARVEST IN OCTOBER. CONSEQUENTLY RAF MAY CONCLUDE MISSION IN AUGUST. RE SIXTH REGION SCHELLENBERG CONFIRMS BARGES TRANSPORTED FROM MOPTI 200 TONS TO NIAFUNFE 200 TONS TO DIRE AND 300 TONS TO TOMBOUCTOU. GOVERNMENT EXPECTS GAO WILL BE REACHED BY MID SEPTEMBER, THEREFORE DIMINISHING DEMAND ON PLANES OPERATING SIXTH REGION. SITUATION REGARDING MALI SEEMS REASSURING. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE GIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO ENSURE NO BREAKDOWN NIGER SUPPLIERS AND IDENTIFY POCKETS ISOLATED BY RAINS WHICH MIGHT NEED SPECIAL TREATMENT.VOLPE

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